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LETTER DATED 4 DECEMBER 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform you that, at 1230 hours on 19 November 1996, the vessel Al-Taif, registered in the United Arab Emirates, was the subject of an attack by armed Kuwaiti patrols aboard four fibreglass gunboats near buoy No. 13 in the Khawr Abd Allah channel within Iraqi territorial waters, after which the Kuwaitis escorted the vessel in the direction of Kuwait. Still nothing is known about the fate of the vessel, which was heading for Khawr al-Zubayr port with a cargo of rice.

I request your intervention with the Government of Kuwait with a view to halting and preventing any repetition of such acts of aggression and provocation by Kuwaiti gunboats against civilian vessels within Iraqi territorial waters, given that such acts are in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the provisions of public international law. I also affirm the established right of the Republic of Iraq to seek compensation for the damage caused to it by this act of aggression, in accordance with the principle of international responsibility.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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